

Clemson University has a long and distinguished military history, and today's dedication of the Scroll of Honor is a testament to this school's continued commitment to honoring those who serve our country. I truly appreciate the Clemson Corp for spearheading this important project.

As Senator, I have had the great honor to meet many of our Nation's soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines serving abroad. They are dedicated, proud individuals who take their jobs to protect our Nation very seriously.

Like the millions of veterans who served before them, they also know the great truth that freedom is never free. It was won and protected for more than two centuries by patriotic Americans willing to risk their lives to defend this great country of ours.

Millions of Americans have given their blood, sweat, and tears in defense of this great land. Many, like the individuals we honor today, paid the ultimate price. Words cannot adequately express the great respect and admiration I have for these individuals.

I, like all Americans, will forever be indebted to them for their sacrifice.

I ask that the U.S. Senate join me in honoring these distinguished Sons of Dear Old Clemson, their families, and the thousands of soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines who continue to serve our Nation. And may God continue to bless our United States of America.●

TRIBUTE TO GERARD BAKER

● Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, today I pay tribute to Gerard Baker, Superintendent of Mount Rushmore National Memorial. Superintendent Baker has accepted a new assignment as Assistant Director for American Indian Relations for the National Park Service. While his leadership at Mount Rushmore will be greatly missed, the entirety of the Park Service will benefit from this new role. I have enjoyed working with Gerard in his capacity as Superintendent and want to take this opportunity to recognize his accomplishments.

During his tenure, Gerard has helped promote a comprehensive understanding of the significance of Mount Rushmore and the surrounding Black Hills. In addition to telling the story of the four Presidents whose likenesses are carved into the mountain, he and his staff have worked to broaden the perspectives of history, culture, and natural resources at the memorial. Visitors, young and old alike, have enjoyed expanded interpretive programs, including an award-winning audio tour available in Lakota and a Heritage Village highlighting the history and customs of local American Indian communities. Gerard has done an admirable job of promoting understanding and celebration of all of the cultures that make up our democracy.

Gerard's long and accomplished career with the National Park Service

began in 1979 at the Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site where he worked as a park technician. He worked his way up and eventually became Superintendent of Little Big Horn Battlefield National Monument. He would later serve as the first Superintendent of the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail before coming to Mount Rushmore. Throughout his career, Gerard has been recognized with numerous awards for exceptional work. He was also recently featured in the Ken Burns documentary "The National Parks: America's Best Idea."

National Park Service Director Jon Jarvis should be commended for recognizing the importance of working with tribes across our country on cultural and natural resources issues central to the Park Service's mission. He could not have picked a better person to represent the Park Service in this capacity. In addition to vast experience with the Park Service, Gerard brings a lifetime of learning from his own heritage as a Mandan-Hidatsa Indian. That perspective, coupled with the charisma and good humor Gerard is so well known for, will be a great asset for the Park Service.

In closing, I would like to thank Gerard and his wife Mary Kay for their dedication to Mount Rushmore and the Black Hills area. I wish him all the best in his new position as Assistant Director for American Indian Relations for the National Park Service. Gerard's efforts at Mount Rushmore will continue to benefit visitors for years to come, and I congratulate him on his accomplishments.●

REMEMBERING VERNON C. POLITE

● Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I wish to honor the life of Vernon C. Polite, dean of the Eastern Michigan University College of Education, who passed away on March 8, 2010. Dean Polite led a life of integrity, passion, and dedication. His exemplary work and his personal warmth surely will be missed by all whose lives he touched. A memorial service will be held on the campus of Eastern Michigan University today to celebrate the life of this wonderful man.

Dean Polite's efforts to enrich the educational experiences of students in Michigan and across the country are truly inspiring. His guidance has left an indelible mark on the institutions in which he has played a part. From his work as principal at Oak Park Public Schools and professor at Catholic University of America, to his roles as founding dean of Bowie State University's School of Education and dean of the Eastern Michigan University College of Education, Dean Polite has set an example of conscientious and courageous leadership.

Dean Polite was embraced by colleagues, students, family, and friends as much for his impressive accomplishments as for his generous heart and personal kindness. He has been called

"an ambassador for education and for social justice across the nation." His dedication to social justice is not only evident in the research he conducted on organizational change and minority educational issues and in his active pursuit of diversity at Eastern Michigan and other institutions but also in the graceful and respectful manner in which he interacted with those around him each day. Dean Polite leaves a void at Eastern Michigan University and in the countless lives he helped to shape. His memory will be a vivid and lasting inspiration to many.

Vernon C. Polite dedicated his life to education and accomplished much in his long and illustrious career. His legacy is that of a life well-spent and is embodied in the accomplishments and aspirations of the students he inspired. I know my colleagues join me in extending condolences to Vernon's sister, Carol Brooks, and his brother, Willie Brooks, as well as to the entire Eastern Michigan University community, as we honor the life of this remarkable man.●

TRIBUTE TO SPECIALIST MICHELLE DONOVAN

● Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, today I honor National Guard Specialist Michelle Donovan, a resident of Hot Springs Village in my home State of Arkansas. Specialist Donovan recently received the Purple Heart for injuries she sustained while serving in Iraq nearly 3 years ago.

Specialist Donovan served as a combat medic assigned to the 875th Engineer Battalion, Arkansas National Guard. On August 21, 2007, while on patrol in Iraq, the vehicle in which she was riding struck an explosive device, leaving her and her four team members seriously wounded. She suffered severe traumatic brain injury and wounds to her leg and shoulder, as well as injuries to her face, requiring a medical discharge from the Arkansas National Guard.

Along with all Arkansans, I salute Specialist Donovan for her bravery, and I am grateful for her service and sacrifice.

More than 11,000 Arkansans on active duty and more than 10,000 Arkansas reservists have served in Iraq or Afghanistan since September 11, 2001. It is the responsibility of our Nation to provide the tools necessary to care for our country's returning servicemembers and honor the commitment our Nation made when we sent them into harm's way. Our grateful Nation will not forget them when their military service is complete. It is the least we can do for those whom we owe so much.●

TRIBUTE TO ALICE SMITH

● Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, today I congratulate Alice Smith for being named the 2009 Citizen of the Year by the Clarendon Chamber of Commerce.

According to those who know her best, Alice is a dedicated community